



WEST NILE VIRUS – FIGHT THE BITE!

There is little chance of serious illness from a mosquito bite. It is estimated that less than one percent of mosquitoes carry the West Nile virus, and fewer than one percent of the people who are bitten by an infected mosquito will become serious ill. While the chances of becoming ill are small, persons over the age of 50 are at higher risk for serious illness. In most people there are no symptoms at all. If a person does show symptoms, they would occur three to 15 days after the mosquito bite. Mild cases of West Nile infection may include a slight fever and/or headache. More severe infections, including encephalitis, are marked by high fever, headache, confusion, muscle aches and weakness. Very severe infections can be fatal. There is no specific treatment for West Nile virus other than supportive care, and there is no vaccine available for humans.

THE BEST WAY TO PREVENT WEST NILE ENCEPHALITIS IS TO AVOID MOSQUITO BITES!

- Wear shoes and socks, long pants and a long sleeved shirt when outdoors at dusk and dawn when mosquitoes are most active.
- Consider using a mosquito repellent, according to directions on the label, when it is necessary to be outdoors when mosquitoes are most active.

CONTROL MOSQUITOES ON AND AROUND YOUR HOME

Many mosquitoes need standing water to lay their eggs. To reduce the mosquito population in and around your home, reduce or eliminate all standing water.

- Dispose of or turn upside down tin cans, plastic containers, ceramic pots or similar water-holding containers.
- Remove all discarded tires from your property. Used tires have become one of the most common mosquito breeding sites in the country.
- Drill holes in the bottoms of all recycling containers that are kept outdoors.
- Make sure roof gutters drain properly, and clean clogged gutters in the spring and fall.
- Turn over plastic wading pools and wheelbarrows when not in use.
- Change the water in bird baths, pet dishes and flower pots at least twice per week.
- Clean vegetation and debris from the edge of ponds.
- Clean and chlorinate swimming pools, outdoor saunas and hot tubs.
- Drain water from pool covers.
- Use landscaping to eliminate standing water that collects on your property.

Arizona has expanded its surveillance network to monitor and control mosquito-borne virus activity in mosquitoes, sentinel chicken flocks and dead birds.

For more information, contact Coconino County Environmental Health at
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